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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 11/21/06

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ARTICLES:

- (1) US lawyer: Priority to efficiency caused incident of unapproved glandular material mixed in shipment

NIHON NOGYO SHIMBUN (Page?) (Full)
November 10, 2006

It has been disclosed that sweetbread, a glandular material that is not authorized for exports to Japan, was found in a US veal shipment to Japan. In this connection, Felicia Nestor, an American lawyer who supports whistle-blowing activities about the insufficient implementation of anti-BSE safety measures in the US, stressed in a speech in Osaka on Nov. 9 that the meatpacker in question is "famous

for its quick slaughter process." He attributed the incident to its stance of giving priority to efficiency. Nestor also reported on the loose management of safety measures across the US, saying, "There are not many government meat inspectors. In addition, they have not been granted enough authority to give instructions on improvement measures."

In slaughterhouses in the US, meat inspectors determine the age of cattle and check if specified risk materials are fully removed. Nestor said, "Some inspectors are asked to inspect (almost simultaneously) two or three plants which are located 200 kilometer away from one another. The number of inspectors should be increased by 10 to 15%."

When a violation of rules on anti-BSE and other measures takes place, the responsible inspector submits a report on the violation to the government, but according to Nestor, "(They have no authority to give instructions to the plant in question, and) only with the plant's presentation of improvement measures, it is concluded that improvement measures have already been taken."

Of the 35 plants certified to export meat to Japan, violation cases involving 26 facilities have been recorded. Regarding these cases, the Japanese government's data note that improvement measures have been taken, but Nestor said, "The plants in problem might have taken only make-shift measures."

Nestor handled internal complaints from meat inspectors until 2004 as a government project member in the US Food Safety Department. He still supports whistle-blower activities.

(2) In BSE debate, US lawyer points out loose management of anti-BSE safety measures: "Even beef from sick cattle is allowed into US food

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chain"

AKAHATA (Page?) (Full)
November 12, 2006

"The United States has not excluded sick cattle from its distribution channel." During a debate session on BSE in Toyo on Nov. 11, Felicia Nestor, a US lawyer supporting whistle-blowing activities by meat inspectors of the US Department of Agriculture, underscored the sloppiness of safety procedures taken at slaughterhouses and packing plants in the US.

In Japan, the government has taken safeguard measures, but in the US, meatpackers are responsible for ensuring the safety of beef. According to Nestor, six cows are slaughtered in one second, but "government inspectors have no authority to stop the process even if they think it is dangerous." Nestor further said that the process is slowed down when foreign inspectors are watching it, adding, "The speed is picked up again once the investigators leave the site. It is impossible to conduct a snap inspection (as suggested by the Japanese government)."

Just after Japan ended its original import ban on US beef imports, vertebral columns, designated as a specified risk material, were found in a US veal shipment. In reaction, Japan reinstated the ban. The reinstated ban was lifted this July, but only three months after that, sweetbread, an unapproved glandular material, was found in a shipment. Nestor said, "Most of the workers at leading companies are migrant workers. Even if executives intend to thoroughly observe safety procedures for Japan-bound beef, such workers do not understand English."

In a lecture delivered in the debate session, Tokyo Medical College Professor Kiyotoshi Kaneko (former acting chairman of the prion panel under the Food Safety Commission) explained how the government, though the safety of US beef remained unconfirmed scientifically, used the panel's report of recommendation compiled on the assumption of implementation of a program of exports to Japan. He then pointed out, "The US and Japan have used different safety standards."

Zenkoku Shokkenren (National Food Health Association) sponsored the debate session. One participant stressed, "The fog is now clearing. Japan should call on the US to take the same safety measures as Japan's."

Focusing on the repeated Beef Export Verification (BEV) violations by the US, the office of House of Councillors member Tomoko Kami of the Japanese Communist Party has produced a report titled, "BEV violation records at US slaughterhouses with licenses to ship beef to Japan."

(3) Changing Okinawa (Part 1): Voters place emphasis more on economy than base issue; New governor to look for common ground on Futenma relocation

ASAHI (Page 37) (Full)
November 21, 2006

Hirokazu Nakaima, 67, former chairman of Okinawa Electric Power Company, won Sunday's Okinawa gubernatorial election, defeating former House of Councillors member Keiko Itokazu, who had the backing of opposition parties, by a margin of about 37,000 votes.

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Nakaima won about 350,000 votes. What is now occurring in Okinawa?

Late at night of Nov. 19 Yoshikazu Shimabukuro, 60, the mayor of Nago City, to which area the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma is slated to be relocated (from Ginowan City), was in the office of Nakaima, the candidate-backed by the ruling coalition for the gubernatorial election. When it was reported that Nakaima was sure to win the race, Shimabukuro, his face beaming, said: "The prefecture's administration cannot be run by advocating only peace. (This view) became a strong driving force for the victory."

Shimabukuro was elected the mayor of Nago City in January, pledging to take over the policy led by the late Mayor Takeo Kishimoto.

Kishimoto locked horns with the central government over the Futenma relocation issue, while joining hands with the central government. He urged the government to accept seven requests, including reaching a conclusion on the use of the base, as conditions for constructing a facility in the offing of Henoko district, in Nago City. When the Japanese and US governments picked Cape Henoko adjacent to residential areas as a new relocation site, Kishimoto reacted strongly, arguing, "That's out of question!"

During the campaign for the mayoral election, Shimabukuro also vowed: "I cannot accept any ideas that are not within the scope of the Henoko offing plan." However, he eventually accepted the government's V-shaped runway plan, which was designed to avoid flights over residential areas.

On the morning of Nov. 20, Shimabukuro told a group of press corps: "We have assumed a position of accepting the V-shaped runaway plan. I will move things while consulting with Mr. Nakaima."

Nakaima will follow the prefectural administration led by Gov. Kenichi Inamine. Like Shimabukuro, Nakaima seems to be willing to cooperate with the central government regarding the Futenma relocation.

Inamine accepted the relocation of Futenma heliport within the prefecture on the condition that a 15-year limit should be set on the use of the replacement facility for Futenma. He opposed, however, the Cape Henoko plan even though tensions grew between Okinawa and Tokyo.

Nakaima, who was serving as chairman of the Okinawa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was one of those who openly criticized Inamine's policy line. Nakaima said in a meeting of an economic circle: "It is not too good to clash with the government." The dominant view in Okinawan business organizations was that it would be wise for Okinawa to elicit assistance from the government to promote its economy, making compromises with Tokyo.

Nakaima, however, took a vague stance toward the V-shaped runaway plan, while saying, "I cannot accept the plan as is." When asked by reporters about how he would deal with the V-shaped plan, he revealed the view of seeking common ground, responding, "I would like to look for a satisfying answer, consulting with the government."

The mayor of Nago City has changed from Kishimoto to Shimabukuro, and Nakaima will replace Okinawa Gov. Inamine. Changing times call for new leaders.

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In a bid to reduce Okinawa's burden of US military bases, the Henoko offing plan was hammered out within the framework of the Japan-US Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), which was set up following the rape of a schoolgirl by US servicemen in 1995.

The purpose of the transformation of US forces is to bolster the US military posture to cope immediately with global terrorism. In Japan-US consultations, the priority was placed on reaching an agreement between the two governments, leaving local sentiments on a back burner.

One Okinawa government official, feeling a change in the tide, said:

"The maneuvering of taking US bases hostage no longer worked in negotiating the realignment of US forces. Gov. Inamine, who followed SACO, had to wrap up his term in office along with SACO. Mr. Nakaima will likely place emphasis on the economy rather than politics in dealing with the US base issues."

(4) Interview with former defense chief Shigeru Ishiba -- Nuclear debate must not be suppressed

Shukan Asahi (Pp.22-25) (Abridged slightly)
December 1, 2006

LDP Policy Research Council Chairman Shoichi Nakagawa's remarks have ignited "debate on possessing nuclear weapons." Many segments of the Japanese media are dismissive of nuclear debate. Is Japan not allowed to discuss such an option? Isn't it appropriate for Japan to discuss it as the only country in the world that suffered from atomic bombings? Writer Eiji Oshita interviewed former Defense Agency Director-General Shigeru Ishiba.

Q: Remarks on possessing nuclear weapons by Foreign Minister Taro Aso and LDP Policy Research Council Chairman Shoichi Nakagawa have sparked controversy. As the person holding the record of the second-longest serving defense chief in the country, what do you think of their comments?

A: The Japanese media have been dismissive of just discussing the subject. I think we should debate whether or not Japan should possess nuclear weapons. If you compare advantages and disadvantages of possessing a nuclear arsenal, the disadvantages outnumber advantages, making it clear that possessing nuclear arms does not serve our national interests in any way.

Q: Prime Minister (Shinzo) Abe has indicated that no Cabinet, government, or party panels would discuss the option of possessing nukes. What do you think of that?

A: If one thinks Japan should go nuclear or make changes to the three non-nuclear principles, including one not allowing bringing nuclear weapons into Japan, and believes that is important for Japan's independence and peace, then voicing such a view openly would be his responsibility as a lawmaker.

Q: One should express one's view openly.

A: I agree. I hear that Secretary General (Hidenao) Nakagawa said in a press conference that the party would not discuss it. If we don't discuss matters, we will lose our ability to think. If we don't give logical thought to security affairs, the country could swing to an

extreme direction, giving way to idealistic arguments, as it did in the past. Not discussing matters is very dangerous.

Q: You have a point there. Without discussion, the country will head for a dangerous direction.

A: As a party in power, the LDP must have its panel discuss the matter. That's lawmakers' job. If one is keeping his mouth shut for fear of losing votes from being labeled as a hawk or a rightist, he is not fulfilling his responsibility as a lawmaker.

Q: Prime Minister Abe has presented himself as a middle-of-the-roader. But his lack of warnings to Mr. Aso and Mr. Nakagawa suggests that he is flying a trial balloon by using those two.

A: I don't know about that. But if he really believes that Japan should uphold the three non-nuclear principles, he should present the reasons for it in party-head debates. His ambiguity may come from his hesitation about paving the way for possessing nuclear weapons at this point in light of his international strategy.

Q: What is your view as a former defense chief?

A: Some people think Japan should possess nukes but I don't find their argument realistic. Their argument is impulsive rather than strategic. I'm afraid other countries feel Japan's nuclear debate is dangerous. We, security experts, are realists. My belief is that defense affairs must be discussed pragmatically, not idealistically.

Q: What would happen if Japan goes nuclear?

A: National livelihood would be affected tremendously. Forty% of Japan's electricity depends on nuclear power generation. Possessing nuclear weapons means a departure from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. As the next step, Japan would have to cancel its nuclear cooperation treaties with America, Canada, Australia, France, Britain, and other countries. As a result, the imports of fuel, reprocessing, and the supply of technology would stop, and nuclear power plants would eventually cease to operate.

Q: Can the country's electricity generated by the nuclear power plants now in place be substituted by other means?

A: It's not possible to substitute it with wind electricity because we won't be able to build enough windmills. The use of solar light and heat would require a tremendous area just for generating the electricity equivalent to one nuclear reactor, and would cost 25 times more. I'm sure Mr. (Shoichi) Nakagawa is aware all that because he once served as economy, trade, and industry minister.

Q: What about relations with the United States?

A: Japan going nuclear would be regarded as a declaration that America's nuclear umbrella is untrustworthy. There are all sorts of people in the United States. Some academics think Japan should possess nuclear arsenal. Even some government officials say the same thing off the record. But the US government will never think that Japan should arm itself with nuclear weapons, for such would lead to an announcement of its distrust of the Japan-US alliance that might tremendously deteriorate relations with Japan. To Americans, Japan is a fearful country, with which they fought war for four years.

Q: You think America has latent fear toward Japan?

A: I think so. It has fear toward China, as well. A US-China alliance might emerge the day Japan possesses nuclear arms. Japan would lose a great deal of what it has gained from the Japan-US security setup. "Anti-America" might strike a chord with many

Japanese people because it sounds cool, but we must discuss squarely what we might lose because of it. That's why I'm saying that nuclear deterrence and nuclear armament should be discussed.

Q: I would like to see more debate on those factors.

A: Japan's possession of nuclear weapons would fundamentally rock the NPT system. Some other countries would say, "Because Japan, the only country ever to have suffered nuclear devastation, possesses nuclear arsenal, we will follow suit." South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Indonesia would all rush to nukes. A world filled with nuclear powers would be far worse than the NPT system today. I don't understand why Japan has to trigger to build such a world.

Q: Obviously, those believing in advantages in a "nuclear deterrent" don't agree with you.

A: Japan is becoming like North Korea. (Laughter) Having nukes as a deterrent is North Korea's logic. North Korea is isolated in the world, whereas Japan is America's ally and has relations with many countries in the world. The two should not say the same thing.

Q: Some people just don't see reality.

A: Nuclear weapons would inflate defense spending. Maintaining nukes would require tremendous costs. It would be even more costly if Japan pursues a complete, independent defense capability by walking away from the Japan-US alliance. That would take a heavy toll on people's livelihood. That is exactly what's happening in North Korea.

Q: Then, how should Japan deal with nuclear weapons targeting Japan?

A: In the near future, Japan will be able to intercept an incoming nuclear missile by using the missile defense system.

Q: What are the chances of intercepting an incoming missile?

A: Pretty high, because it's a two-staged system - at sea and ground.

Q: You mean right now?

A: The ground system will be in place in December this year, ahead of original schedule. Japan will finish deploying the overall system in five to ten years.

Q: Progress in research will enable Japan to shoot down 999 missiles out of 1,000?

A: That's possible in the future.

Q: Will the government budget funds for it?

A: The government decided to introduce the missile defense system

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when I was serving as defense chief. At that time, many people harshly criticized me. They didn't know anything about the missile defense system. They said the system would be useless.

Q: Mr. Ishiba, you are now serving as chair of the LDP defense policy subcommittee.

A: Once our debate on the right to collective self-defense is over, we are scheduled to discuss "Japan's national policy," including the three non-nuclear principles.

Q: But the secretary general has indicated that the party should not discuss such matters. Is there a possibility that Mr. Nakagawa will order discontinuing discussion?

A: That would depend on the time.

Q: If he said so, you would not be able to discuss the subject?

A: The Policy Research Council has exclusive authority over policy discussion. I don't know at this point if the secretary general's decision can sway the PRC's policy direction and what would be discussed by the General Council.

Q: The situation is quite severe, isn't it? The other day, I watched the TV program "Discuss until Morning," in which 55% of viewers said Japan should consider going nuclear, while 41% did not think so. Such figures might prompt some lawmakers to call for Japan going nuclear.

A: I didn't expect those figures. I noticed that even those who think Japan should not go nuclear remained in the realm of emotional argument. They repeated, "as the only country in the world that ever suffered atomic bombings." People on either side lacked solid logic. That's why I think realists must step in and clearly explain why Japan must not possess nuclear arms.

SCHIEFFER